



Final Minutes of the Governor's Interagency Council on Health Disparities

December 11, 2013

**Department of Health, Point Plaza East, Rooms 152/153
310 Israel Road SE, Tumwater, WA 98501**

HDC members present:

Marietta Bobba
Gail Brandt
Kameka Brown
Vazaskia Caldwell
Nora Coronado
Kim Eads
Willie Frank
Nova Gattman

Jonathan Green
Diane Klontz
Steve Kutz
Frankie Manning
Emma Medicine White Crow
Millie Piazza
Greg Williamson

HDC members absent:

Sofia Aragon

Gwendolyn Shepherd

HDC Staff present:

Michelle Davis, Executive Director
Timothy Grisham, Communications Consultant
Christy Hoff, Health Policy Analyst

Yris Lance, CLAS Project Manager
Desiree Robinson, Executive Assistant
Sierra Rotakhina, Health Policy Analyst

Guests and Other Participants:

Ann Bulter, Department of Health
Paul Davis, Department of Health
Amy Ellings, Department of Health
Michelle Glatt, Qualis Health
Jeff Mero, Association of Washington Public
Hospital Districts

Fauna Larkin, Western WA Area Health
Education Center
Frances Limtiaco, Department of Health
Jodi Perlmutter, Western WA Area Health
Education Center
Joella Pyatt, Department of Health
Juliet VanEenwyk, Department of Health

Emma Medicine White Crow, Council Chair, called the public meeting to order at 9:51 a.m. and read from a prepared statement (on file). She facilitated introductions and asked Dr. Kameka Brown, Council member representing the Commission on African American Affairs to say a few words of introduction. She thanked Winona Hollins-Hague, who had been with the Council since its inception, for her service.

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion: Approve December 11, 2013 agenda

Motion/Second: Vazaskia Caldwell/Marietta Bobba. Approved unanimously

2. ADOPTION OF SEPTEMBER 11, 2013 MEETING MINUTES

Nova Gattman, Council Member, said the name of the Health Care Personnel Shortage Task Force was listed incorrectly on page 6 of the draft minutes.

Motion: Approve the September 11, 2013 minutes with the requested change.

***Motion/Second:** Diane Klontz/ Vazaskia Caldwell. Approved unanimously*

3. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COUNCIL BUSINESS

Christy Curwick Hoff, Council Staff, referred Council members to a letter of support to Public Health—Seattle & King County for their application to participate in the CityMatCH Institute on Equity in Birth Outcomes. She said the application was successful. She reviewed the Council's policy on communicating with the Legislature and asked Council members to feel free to suggest bills they believed the Council should monitor during session. She introduced Sierra Rotakhina, Council staff, who will be responsible for conducting health impact reviews and providing research support to the State Board of Health and Council. Ms. Rotakhina provided a few additional words of introduction. Gail Brandt, Council Member, asked if the Council's guidance on communicating with the legislature differed from the guidance/rules for state agencies. Ms. Hoff said the Council had to follow the same rules regarding lobbying and that the policy provided additional guidance.

4. PROPOSED 2014 COUNCIL MEETING SCHEDULE

Desiree Robinson, Council staff, shared the proposed 2014 meeting schedule. She highlighted that most meetings would be on Thursdays. She said staff would likely schedule the May meeting in the Seatac area and requested that members share ideas for meeting locations. Steve Kutz, Council Member, said he had a conflict with one date, but recognized that it would be impossible to find dates that worked for everyone.

***Motion:** The Council approves the 2014 meeting schedule as submitted on December 11, 2013.*

***Motion/Second:** Vazaskia Caldwell/Nora Coronado. Approved unanimously*

5. UPDATE—CLAS PROJECT

Yris lance, Council Staff, provided an update on the Council's grant project to promote the adoption of the National Standards for Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services (presentation on file under tab 5). She said she sent emails to many members asking if their agencies would be interested in participating in the project. She said CLAS Standards are not just for health and healthcare organizations, but for any agency wishing to provide culturally and linguistically appropriate services. She asked that Council members let her know if they are aware of conferences or meetings where they would like to have a presentation on CLAS. Greg Williamson, Council Member, thanked Ms. Lance for sharing information at CLAS with Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction staff and said she was invited to return to provide a presentation to OSPI cabinet members. Vazaskia Caldwell, Council Member, said she had an introductory meeting with Ms. Lance and has put together a strategy for her agency. She said she would invite Ms. Lance to return and provide a presentation to the Executive Leadership Team. Millie Piazza, Council Member, said she had also met with Ms. Lance for an introductory meeting. She said the Department of Ecology has not yet committed, adding that she is trying to raise awareness of the importance of CLAS. She said she was working with the Environmental Protection Agency to determine whether any other state environmental agency had adopted the CLAS Standards. Ms. Lance thanked Member Piazza for her assistance on the draft engagement letter to ensure it was appropriate for non-health related organizations. Member Brandt said the Department of Health is going to wait until the agency's new Chief of Health Equity begins work. Ms. Lance said she has also met with and shared information on CLAS with representatives from Molina Healthcare. Emma thanked Ms. Lance for being a resource. She said we should honor culture and language and that this would help to undue harms.

6. BRIEFING—HEALTH IMPACT REVIEWS

Ms. Hoff said a health impact review is an analysis of a legislative or budgetary proposal to determine if the proposal might have an impact on health disparities. She provided a broad overview of health impact reviews and the types of reviews completed in the past. Ms. Rotakhina shared activities and future plans for outreach and strategies for improving reviews. She also discussed ways that Council members have been involved in the past. The staff presentation is on file under Tab 6. Member Gattman suggested also meeting with and sharing information with caucus staff. Member Brandt suggested that agency staff let others in their agencies who may be working on bill analyses know if a health impact review is being completed. Member Williamson asked for clarification about whether a review could be requested for a policy that has already passed. Ms. Hoff said they could only be requested for legislative and budgetary proposals. Member Williamson said that education and health are linked and that the factors that influence health also influence education. He said he would initiate some discussions around similar analyses for educational disparities.

7. BRIEFING—TOBACCO PREVENTION AND CONTROL PROGRAM

Gail Brandt, Council Member, introduced the agenda item and presenters from the Department of Health. Frances Limtiaco, Tobacco Prevention and Chronic Disease Disparities Coordinator, provided an overview of the panel presentation (on file under tab 7) and said she hoped to enhance partnership with the Council as they worked to develop a new strategic plan. Paul Davis, Tobacco Prevention and Oral Health Program Manager, provided an overview of the program. He said tobacco use remains the most preventable cause of death and chronic disease. He shared the four goals for tobacco prevention and control, noting that the first goal is to eliminate tobacco related disparities. He highlighted that overall rates have dropped yet disparities were growing. Ms. Limtiaco presented data on disparities. She provided information on partnerships with community based organizations to address tobacco disparities. She highlighted recent efforts by the tobacco industry to target African American youth with advertising related to menthol cigarettes and provided data on disparities in use of menthol cigarettes. Joella Pyatt, Tobacco Cessation Coordinator, provided an overview of the Tobacco Quitline – a national telephone based cancelling program that is offered in English and Spanish with interpretation in other languages.

Member Kutz suggested that program staff look at trends in youth smoking disparities over time. Kim Eads, Council Member, asked if the program had information or a focus on e-cigarettes. Mr. Davis, Ms. Limtiaco and Council members discussed some of the concerns for e-cigarettes, including marketing, use in alternative schools, potential toxicity of the fluid (particularly in childcare settings), and that they are an unregulated product. Frankie Manning, Council Vice Chair, suggested that partnerships with community services could be helpful. Member Kutz shared his concerns with the lack of funds for the Quitline. He asked whether the program was considering alternative forms of technology (web-based or recorded phone messages) to fill the void if necessary. Nora Coronado, Council Member, asked about disparities for the Hispanic population as well as for those with mental illness. Ms. Limtiaco said Hispanic rates are lower than the state average, adding that those who are more acculturated are more likely to smoke. Mr. Davis added that smoking rates are much higher for people entering chemical dependency treatment and those with mental illness. Member Williamson said that kids often use tobacco as a coping mechanism for bullying or other problems.

8. BRIEFING—WASHINGTON ENVIRONMENTAL BIOMONITORING SURVEY

Millie Piazza, Council Member, introduced the agenda item. Ann Butler, Department of Health Staff, introduced what biomonitoring is, the CDC grant that the biomonitoring team has received,

three completed projects, and the current biomonitoring project. Ms. Butler explained that the ultimate goal of the CDC grant is to collect data that will inform prevention measures. Ms. Butler presented study findings such as the presence of higher levels of environmental toxins in lower income groups. Ms. Butler then shared an exposure educational brochure that they have translated into eight languages (on file under tab 8). She explained that they might be able to use more advisory committee members to help inform their studies.

Member Kutz asked whether they are planning to keep track of the participants to conduct longitudinal data collection and analysis in the future. He then asked if people who have been exposed could expect a reversal of cumulative effects if they end exposure now. Ms. Butler said that they have asked participants permission to store samples for up to five years. Juliet VanEenwyk, Department of Health Staff, indicated that BPA has been removed from many plastics but that the substitutes are now showing up in humans. Ms. Butler said it is difficult to avoid plastics, but that we know more now about ways to limit exposure—for example not heating food in plastics. Ms. VanEenwyk explained that there is a need to study BPA substitutes and their health impacts. Member Eads indicated that the Department of Agriculture would like to be involved in some outreach effort. She said the meeting materials would be of particular interest to the Food System Roundtable. She indicated that if this information could be made available in a brochure, than the Department of Agriculture could distribute to their member groups. Chair Medicine White Crow asked if they recommended people remove their shoes before entering their homes to reduce the tracking of metals into the home. Ms. VanEenwyk indicated that they do conduct these interventions in areas with high levels of metal in the soil. Member Piazza asked if the studies have looked at the link between exposures and academic outcomes or behaviors. Ms. VanEenwyk said they did not ask questions about academic performance. Kameka Brown, Council Member, asked if they would be tracking this cohort to see impacts of endocrine disrupters. Ms. VanEenwyk indicated that they would not be. Member Coronado asked if this information is mapped and how these exposures affect, for example, Latinos or American Indians in these regions. Ms. VanEenwyk explained that results are posted on the Washington Tracking Network, and that they were able to look at the results by race/ethnicity. Ms. VanEenwyk said that they have identified three high-arsenic areas, but they have not done any mapping. Member Piazza commented that she is seeing the issue of biomonitoring coming up with community advocacy groups. Chair Medicine White Crow said she attended the NW Children's Environmental Health Forum and pointed out that what you are exposed to as a child will impact you as an adult and can even affect your grandchildren.

The Council recessed for lunch at 12:10 p.m. and reconvened at 1:05 p.m.

9. UPDATE—FOOD SYSTEM ROUNDTABLE

Chair Medicine White Crow referred Council members to the memo under tab 9. She introduced Amy Ellings, Healthy Eating Active Living Program Manager, who provided information on the Food Systems Roundtable. She said they lost funding to support their Roundtable facilitator. A key accomplishment to date was the creation of the Roundtable's charter and one of the guiding principles in the charter is to promote health equity. She said the Roundtable has a large membership (26 members) and that it can convene workgroups, including external participants. She said they are continuing to recruit Roundtable members. Vice Chair Manning asked about membership for farmers, community groups, and transportation representatives. Ms. Ellings said they had some representatives from the farming community, and listed some of the community-based organizations participating. She thanked Vice Chair Manning for the suggestion to include transportation. Marietta Bobba, Council Member, asked about the best way to make a recommendation for membership. Ms. Ellings said they could contact her directly. Vice Chair

Manning asked about rotation for members. Ms. Ellings said members serve two-year terms. Member Gattman asked about goals for the first year. Ms. Ellings said their first goal was to work on the 25-year vision. She added that they hoped to implement strategies to increase collaboration between agencies. Members discussed strategies for Council member involvement and other projects and initiatives that could align with the Roundtable. In addition, members provided input on issues and strategies that the Roundtable should consider, including ensuring healthy foods in schools, food insecurity, culturally appropriate foods, traditional foods, food deserts, and addressing transportation barriers. Member Gattman specifically mentioned farm to school programs that have been successful. She indicated potential interest in serving on the Roundtable and said she would talk to Ms. Ellings further. Jonathan Green, Council Member, discussed programs in the Early Childhood Assistance and Education Program, including gardening programs. Member Bobba, highlighted the success of some tribal seniors programs. Member Caldwell discussed the need to modify traditional and cultural foods to make them healthier.

10. UPDATE—RURAL HEALTHCARE STRATEGIC PLAN

Chair Medicine White Crow referred Council members to the memo under tab 10. She reminded the Council that one of its recommendations in the 2012 action plan was for the Legislature to support the recommendations in the Rural Healthcare Strategic Plan. She introduced Jeff Mero, Executive Director of the Association of Washington Public Hospital Districts. Mr. Mero said the Rural Healthcare Strategic Plan was supported in a large part through Department of Health grants. Mr. Mero gave his presentation (on file under tab 10), including data on disparities faced by rural communities. He also shared successes in promoting health in rural communities, highlighting efforts to reduce rates of late stage breast cancer in Lincoln County. He also showed two short videos on efforts by rural hospitals to improve care for the communities they serve. He said his association is trying to educate policymakers and request their support for the kinds of programs highlighted in the videos.

Member Brown, thanked Mr. Mero for his presentation and suggested he look into some of the foundations that are supporting rural health, such as the Josiah Macy Jr. Foundation and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Member Bobba asked about telemedicine and transportation needs in rural communities. Mr. Mero said there is a video demonstrating telemedicine in Newport County. Member Kutz said he participated in a community needs assessment in Mason County, which eventually led to the creation of Mason Matters. He shared how you can accomplish a lot with few resources by bringing a coalition together. Vice Chair Manning said the Veterans Administration has been implementing telemedicine for many years and suggested that perhaps some rural communities could partner with the VA. Member Williamson said many federal agencies were targeted funding and resources for environmental and systems changes and asked whether that was a barrier for organizations with other priorities. Mr. Mero said communities have a way of supporting the issues that matter to them. Mr. Mero and Council members discussed possible reasons for the higher death rates due to injuries in rural communities.

11. PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Medicine White Crow announced that she was starting the public comment period and read a prepared statement (on file).

Michelle Glad, Qualis Health, introduced herself and said Qualis Health is a non-profit healthcare quality improvement organization. She said Qualis Health works on the provider side and is trying to work with communities and clinics to find new ways to reduce disparities. She said they had a thought leader's forum a few weeks ago to start the conversation.

The Council took a break at 2:12 p.m. and reconvened at 2:25 p.m.

12. REVIEW AND DISCUSS ACTION PLAN UPDATE

Chair Medicine White Crow referred members to the memo under tab 12. She said the Council has another action plan update due to the Governor and Legislature at the end of the month. She said Council members had the opportunity to review the draft text and provide any additions or edits to staff. Ms. Hoff walked Council members through the draft text.

Council members discussed the content and format of the report and made recommendations for minor changes to the format. These included changing the format of Table 1 to use open, closed, and half circles in place of red, yellow, and green circles; making slight modifications to the language in some of the indicators; and including footnotes where further explanation may be needed. Council members discussed including language in future reports indicating that the Council's recommendations are supporting the Governor's Results Washington goals.

Motion: *The Council approves in concept the draft text of the December 2013 Update as submitted on December 11, 2013, directs staff to incorporate changes from today's discussion as necessary, and authorizes the chair to approve the final report for submission to the Governor and Legislature.*

Motion/Second: *Stephen Kutz/Kameka Brown. Approved unanimously*

13. REVIEW AND DISCUSS RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE PRIORITY SETTING WORKGROUP

Chair Medicine White Crow referred members to the memo under tab 13. She said at the Council's last meeting, they agreed to create a workgroup to meet in the interim to develop a proposal of future priorities for the full Council's consideration. She said Council Members Bobba, Brandt, Caldwell, and herself met on November 26.

Member Brandt reminded Council members that they represent their agencies and that when they vote on any matter they are voting to represent their agencies rather than their personal interests. She then shared information on the briefing materials that workgroup members reviewed at their meeting. Materials included information on past prioritization processes and health issues of interest to the Governor, state agencies, commissions, and community-based organizations doing racial equity work in the state. Materials also included statewide and national data on health disparities. Member Brandt said they did not get far enough to bring a proposal to the Council for today's meeting. Instead, they identified a few questions and discussion items. She mentioned that the prioritization work group had a meeting scheduled for January 30, 2014.

Member Caldwell asked Council members how they ensure they are speaking on behalf of their entire organization and what process members use to ensure that when they vote on a motion they have their agency's approval to do so. Member Caldwell facilitated this discussion among Council members giving each member an opportunity to speak.

Member Bobba said the Legislature intended the Council to focus on disparities by race/ethnicity and gender and that over the years they had received requests to expand their focus to other populations. She asked members their thoughts on looking at disparities faced by other populations, such as people with disabilities, rural populations, immigrant or refugee population that are not of color, and the LGBTQ community. Member Brown indicated that she would like to include the population of foster children, since African American children are disproportionately represented in this population. Member Kutz indicated that this is also an issue for Native American children.

Member Williamson indicated that they use the broader term ‘vulnerable youth’ to discuss foster youth, youth with incarcerated parents, youth with military parents, etc. Member Brandt suggested that it does not have to be either/or, but that they can do both. Ms. Hoff explained that Senator Franklin had indicated in 2006 that she wanted the Council to focus on disparities by race/ethnicity and gender but that the Council could expand this scope at the discretion of the members. Member Caldwell indicated that she does not want to see the Council move away from race/ethnicity and gender as a priority even if they do consider other populations. Member Williamson agreed that looking at both vulnerable student populations as well as race/ethnicity are important. Member Gattman suggested that if they look at vulnerable youth that they define the age above 18 years.

Chair Medicine White Crow said the Council approved a motion at its last meeting to implement the CLAS standards as a new priority. She indicated that in doing so they set a precedent for the Council to adopt existing recommendations to take action on rather than selecting and developing new recommendations around an issue. She asked Council members for their thoughts on this and if they would consider doing something similar again. Members Bobba, Brandt, and Caldwell expressed that they are comfortable incorporating recommendations such as what they did with CLAS. Member Williamson recommended that they line their priorities up with what the Governor is trying to do with Results Washington. Member Green indicated that it is their role, as an advisory body, to keep the conversation going about disparities so that the conversation does not get lost within their agencies.

14. COUNCIL MEMBER COMMENTS AND UPDATES

Ms. Hoff referred members to documents under tab 14 that Member Brandt had submitted. Member Green pointed out some key components of DEL’s monthly update. Member Piazza provided an update on the Regional Health Equity Council meeting in Seattle. She highlighted that one priority identified during the meeting is building a web presence for the Region X RHEC. Member Piazza asked if staff could provide a quick summary of the Council meeting highlights that members could use to share with their agencies. Member Coronado said that the Group Health Research Institute received funding to support Latino health research and that they are identifying academics who conduct research on Latino community health. Member Williamson said he is now participating in the Governor’s Health Leadership Team meetings. Member Caldwell shared information about the State Health Care Improvement Planning effort and asked Ms. Hoff to send the draft out to Council members. Member Kutz said that it is important for members, whenever possible, to be involved in their communities’ health planning efforts. He urged members to take advantage of any opportunity to get involved in community work.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair White Crow adjourned the meeting at 4:09 p.m.